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Apr 1st, 8:00 AM

## Florida Transportation –Where To From Here?

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### Scholarly Commons Citation

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## FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION --- WHERE TO FROM HERE?

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Florida now has the only "lunar" highway in this galaxy. Man can travel non-stop from Cape Kennedy to the moon -- a distance of 238,857 miles in 3½ days. It has been proven that will-power and adequate financing can accomplish previously unbelievable tasks. Going to the moon has been the feat of the century.

It seems man does well as long as he is airborne but when he returns to earth trouble starts. There are so many of us now -- and increasing every year -- to compound the problem we each have our own private automobiles -- at least one. Roads, highways and parking lots are being constructed at a greater rate than ever before but we still are unable to keep up with the demand. Cars are being manufactured faster than roads. Our mobile population is increasing its mobility. It knows where it wants to go and it knows how it wants to get there -- but where do we go from here? Control, comfort, cost and convenience are the prime factors. The private automobile satisfies all these requirements but -- in many instances you can't get there from here -- even where possible we are subjected to road hazards, congestion, pollution, delays and many other aggravations.

Florida -- the beautiful vacationland is both typical and unique. Our citizens and visitors demand the same good transportation services as do those of other states but because of many "sociogeoeconomic" factors we are different.

### ROLE OF STATE GOVERNMENT

Florida government has begun to recognize some of its transportation responsibilities and the need for careful planning and development. At the Sixth Space Congress I explained circumstances surrounding the creation of the Department of Transportation by the 1967 Legislature. This major creation indicated that our state leaders were awakening to the developing public transportation problems. They were not, however, sufficiently aware to appropriate the funds necessary to

establish the Department. Money was found to "open a shop" with a small staff of four people. During the ensuing year the Department of Transportation worked at "preaching the gospel" of public transportation becoming informed and studying the problems -- also cautioning against the horrendous traffic conditions existing in the Northeast Corridor, Los Angeles, Chicago and other densely populated centers. A data bank and reference library was started as was an inventory of all modes of transportation. Short and long range goals were established and supporters were solicited. Looming on the political horizon was state governmental reorganization which was seen as potential salvation.

On July 1, 1969, we "passed through reorganization" and became a Division of the newly created Department of Transportation along with the State Road Department and the Florida Turnpike Authority. The alignment was good and association with the financially-endowed State Road Department appeared promising. We were designated as the Division of Mass Transit Operations by the 1969 Legislature. We prefer the name "Division of Public Transportation." "Mass Transit" bears a restrictive and inaccurate connotation reserved mostly for subway and rapid transit systems while we -- and the Legislature -- intend and represent total transportation -- air, rail, water and ground systems; everything excepting only the private automobile. Our objective became the planning and development of a balanced transportation system incorporating all modes of transportation -- one that maximizes coordination and modal mix and minimizes competition.

### DOT'S DIVISION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Division of Public Transportation (Mass Transit Operations) operates under authority of Chapter 69-106, Section 23, Laws of Florida. Additional statutory authority is provided by Chapters 330.27 - 330.36, 330.38 and 330.39, of the Florida Statutes.

### General Responsibilities

- (1) Promotion of mass transportation systems at local levels of government.
- (2) Coordination of local efforts in mass transportation systems.
- (3) Design and implementation of operating procedures and supervisory techniques for agencies involved in mass transit.
- (4) Development of information about transportation in Florida through special studies.
- (5) Analysis of data collected on specific aspects of mass transit.
- (6) Monitoring new mass transportation technology.
- (7) Licensing of airports and approval of proposed airport sites.
- (8) Preparation, publication, and distribution of airport directories.
- (9) Conducting aviation safety workshops and seminars.

### Organizational Structure

At the present time the staff of the Division of Mass Transit Operations consists of a Director; Administrative Assistant; Chief, Bureau of Operations; Chief, Bureau of Research and Development; a Field Representative and three secretaries. This year the budget is \$135,000. The budget for next year as recommended by the Governor calls for the appropriation of \$947,610, of which \$505,000 is anticipated federal funds. His recommendation also calls for funding the Division from the state road primary trust fund and other trust funds as appropriate. This requires a change of law for heretofore this fund could be used for road purposes only.

Presently there are two functioning bureaus in the Division.

- (1) Bureau of Research and Development - Responsible for the design of model systems; feasibility analysis of specific systems applications; feasibility for facility locations; analysis and projection of services which can be performed utilizing new modes; determination of methods of financing, installation and operation of public transportation systems. Coordination with local authorities and other state agencies to gain support for new modal applications; establishment of a Florida Transportation Center to improve research

and development; analysis of technology and development of plans for pilot projects in Florida.

- (2) Bureau of Transportation Operations - Responsible for the annual inspection and licensing of all airports; inspection and approval of proposed airport sites; cooperation, advice, and assistance to Federal, State, County, Regional, Municipal, local or private organizations on matters pertaining to aviation; overseeing operations of mass transit facilities and operation of watercraft, shipping, and port development.

### PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR 1970-71

It is proposed that present programs be continued which are primarily concerned with information gathering; coordinating, promoting; and airport licensing. Three additional positions are requested for the aviation section to perform aviation functions assigned by governmental reorganization and to cope with the increased volume of paperwork resulting from airport inspection and licensing activity. Four other new positions were requested to provide expertise in transit operations and a field capability.

New programs proposed include expanding urban public transportation activities which are economically and socially desirable and matching local contributions with state funds for feasibility and technical studies and demonstration projects to promote public transportation. The program would be geared to: (a) development of a comprehensive information base; (b) immediate-action programs for improvement of existing services; and (c) development of public transportation systems which enhance and accelerate the economic goals of Florida.

Specific new projects recommended are:

- (1) Inventory of Urban Public Transportation Systems - Development of a public transportation data base as a prime requisite to informed program planning.
- (2) Operational Studies of Existing Transit Systems - Review of the service and operating characteristics of transit (bus) companies serving each metropolitan area in Florida.
- (3) Study of Transportation Terminals - Investigation of the use and functions of transportation centers/terminals in urban areas.
- (4) Analysis of Social Aspects of Public Transportation - Improvement of travel for those who do not own, operate, or have access to an automobile.

(5) Urban Corridor Analysis - Investigation of applicability of public transportation or improved systems in high density corridors specifically tied to an urban area.

(6) Airport Study - Inventory of airport operation and management, coordinated with intercity public transportation planning studies by the Division of Transportation Planning.

(7) Study Design - Goods Movement Survey - Development of study design for survey of the operations and management of freight transportation within Florida.

(8) Cross-Central Florida Public Transportation Corridor Study - Study for development of an advanced form of intercity transportation to connect the Tampa-Saint Petersburg region to the Orlando-Cape Kennedy region.

## GOALS

In developing a program short and long range goals have been considered. Immediately there is an urgent need to analyze and improve existing transportation systems -- buses especially. Practically every bus transit operation in the country is in financial difficulty. Labor costs are spiraling and ridership is diminishing. Fare increases are indicated and that will compound the problem. Public support is necessary; a broader financial base must be established if the public is to be properly served.

## Bus Transit

Bus transportation offers the nearest solution to public transportation problems in Florida. We know the urban needs exist but it will be necessary to provide the financial base and change the image of bus transit. Smaller, brighter, comfortable and safe units must be pressed into service on improved and more flexible schedules. They must be made to accommodate people. Transit operators should be reminded of the need to move people, not buses. The state can help a great deal by providing the leadership and a portion of the total funding in partnership with the local communities and/or the Federal government. Exclusive bus lanes can be planned and developed along with turn-in and out lanes, parking areas, and sheltered bus stops. You may have read of the controversy which arose over the 102-inch bus -- this is a subject which must be reconsidered again soon in behalf of inter-urban travel.

## Railroads

Railroads today require close scrutiny and, no

doubt, some kind of assistance. They, too, are in deep financial trouble and passenger service is diminishing at a serious rate. The railroads do not want people passengers "they complain too much and aren't worth the trouble." "Freight is much less troublesome and much more lucrative." But -- people need railroads and railroads can be competitive with airlines! At least, up to about 400 miles. Rail travel can provide a luxury not available in airliners if they can recover and retain the market. They have beaucoup upgrading to do -- new equipment which is fast and safe -- and, like buses, bushels of money. All this can come through united effort of private enterprise and government.

## Aviation

Considerable time and effort are now being spent in the field of aviation. The Governmental Reorganization Act gave the Department of Transportation the responsibility for licensing and inspecting all the airports (265) in the State of Florida and the Secretary assigned this operation to the Division of Public Transportation. It has become apparent that general aviation has been sadly neglected in past years and it is our objective to rectify this situation. To strengthen this position, considerable hope is held out for passage of the Airport/Airways Bill (S.3108) in Congress, which will provide \$2.5 million dollars -- a great boost to aviation.

Florida's airports are being upgraded. Inspections during the past few months revealed that 53% did not meet the minimum safety requirements! Corrective action was taken immediately. This great need must be met more positively; however, with an adequate staff here in the Division of Public Transportation in the Department of Transportation. Again, approval of our budget will be a step forward. Legislative action is also being recommended to make available to the Division about half of the more than \$2 million dollars the State derives from aviation. This can be returned to the industry in the form of service and grants through this Agency. Support of this cause is being encouraged. Airport access, as you can all attest, is a great problem.

## Marine

Shipping as an industry and our fourteen ports have received very little attention from the State so far, but there is need to get into this area. Passenger liners and cruise ships do well in Florida, but constantly require improved dockside facilities. Jacksonville's containerport is progressing with local interest and motivation.

## Transportation Terminals

Transportation terminals should be developed where

the public can travel from one single point of origin via any one of several modes to the destination of his choice. Instead of having to decide in advance which way he wants to travel before knowing whether he should go to an airport, a bus terminal or a railroad station -- he can depart from one single location where the modes mix and he has a choice.

#### WHERE TO TOMORROW

It is recognized that planning for tomorrow must start today and transportation is no exception. We hear that much of our references to ACV's, SST's, VSTOL's are considered to be "pie in the sky" but so be it. If we are to have effective and efficient public transportation in the year 1980 or 2000 we must plan for it today. We are contemplating the use of tracked air cushion vehicles, hovercraft, short range and vertical takeoff aircraft, Turbo-Trains, supersonic aircraft, gravi-trains, nuclear eels and many, many others. These are the modes of the future -- we should be ready for them. State government has an important role in the transportation of the future. The public needs should be satisfied -- we must be ready with ideas and funds. The ceiling is unlimited -- there is no telling where we can go from here. We went to the moon last year !